

Casa de Angeles

"House of Angels. Home of Hope."

Spring Newsletter, 2010

Memo from Mickey

Greetings to all:

Once again, I write this message after some of the board members of the Casa de Angeles Foundation have had the opportunity to be in Guatemala this spring and to visit the orphanage. We were struck by the ongoing growth and progress of the children, as well as the increasing number of children.

There are now 71 children. This is an increase of 17 children since last Spring's newsletter – quite a jump! Our staff consists of 15 adult members of the orphanage community, including three novices, four *ayudantes* (helpers), two rotating armed guards (covering 24/7), four teachers, and the two Sisters. The armed guards are the result of a deteriorating security situation in Guatemala and some extortion-threat calls that were made to the Sisters a number of months ago. Although things have calmed down and the local police are trying to patrol in the area more frequently, they recommended the hiring of the security guards, and we all concurred.

The reason for the sudden increase in the number of children is that the international community has pressured Guatemala to close orphanages that were just acting as conduits for lawyers to adopt infants out to foreign parents. Much of the way this was being done was unsavory. Additionally, the government, which does not fund orphanages, has forced the closing of some other orphanages. *(Please continue reading, over.)*

Fridge Foto!

Toni Golbus created this issues's photo montage of the orphanage and the kids. Enjoy!

Orphanage Visit Invitation!

From time to time, some of you kind supporters of the Casa de Angeles Foundation have inquired as to whether there would ever be an opportunity to visit the orphanage. We would be willing to lead a group to Antigua for a 4-6 day visit, and share our various projects with you. During this time, we would visit the orphanage twice, tour the hospital where we lead medical missions, and visit the related Casa de Fe where patients and their families stay before and after surgery. Plus, we would see some of the water purification installations we have made, and also visit the fledgling Genetics Institute of Central America. On your own, you could also visit the Mayan ruins in Tikal, Lake Atitlan, and the market at Chichicastenaga. We can connect you with the travel agent we use.

The trip would take place in late October or early November. We need to know fairly soon of your interest. Please reply to me at casaangeles@aol.com.

Mickey

Memo from Mickey, cont'd.:

The Sisters have scrambled to try to take in some of these suddenly -- and once again -- homeless children.

All of the children continue to flourish in the love provided them, and I can even report continuing growth spurts as we start hitting "the hormone years" with our oldest group of children. (However, a growth spurt in Guatemala is a relative measure.)

The level of soccer (*futbol*) play is improving. I suspect that we adults had better challenge the children quickly, if we are to ever have any hope of winning again. Many of the children have also been attending karate classes; so, we have our own group of "mighty mites." Some of us were privileged to have a karate demonstration performed for our entertainment. There was also to be a Spanish dance exhibition, but they could not get the music to play. Alas, another time.

One other event which occurred while we were there was the birth of a baby goat. Hopefully, the "new kid on the block" will be able to tolerate all the love the children are showering on it!

A number of "minor" projects are coming to fruition: We have replaced the soccer field with one of artificial grass so we will not have to re-sod each year. Also, a pergola has been built over part of the cement play area between Casitas 1 & 2 to provide shade in the summer months. Additionally, a cemetery area has been built on the back of the property near the Sisters' meditation hut. Plus, a generator is being installed which will give us energy independence, so that the orphanage will not suffer the loss of power and water, an event which occurs in the area a number of times each year.

With the influx of new children and the unwavering aging of our oldest cohort, (*Continued, above right.*)

(*Continued from below left.*) we have stepped up our plans for the young adult (high school/college age) facilities. We -- the Sisters, architect, contractor, and Foundation -- have agreed on these plans. A budget has been submitted and we expect to start construction very soon. The built-out orphanage will eventually serve 100-110 children, ranging from newborns to university students, some of whom will be planning for their weddings and getting ready to leave *El Nido*, the nest.

Last fall, while four of us were visiting, we again -- for the 2nd year -- planted a vegetable garden with both the seeds and the children being well-watered. Each year, we are rewarded with a bumper crop that keeps the kids eating their own veggies all winter long.

All of this has progress been made possible because of your support, spiritually and financially. On behalf of the children, the Board of Directors want to thank you again for your generous support. Your love and commitment continues to change the future for an ever increasing number of children. Blessings to you!

Mickey Golbus, M.D.

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Please feel free to contact us at any time with your questions, comments, or ideas. All donations to Casa de Angeles are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

HAPPY TIMES



OUR NEW SCHOOL (1ST-5TH GRADES)